PROMISING PRACTICES
IN
FIRST NATIONS, MÉTIS
AND
INUIT EDUCATION

CASE STUDIES
OF
TWO ALBERTA SCHOOLS

MAY 2007

Alberta

For further information, contact
First Nation, Métis and Inuit Services
9th Floor, 44 Capital Boulevard
10044 – 108 Street
Edmonton, Alberta T5J 5E6

Telephone (780) 415-9300
Toll free in Alberta by dialing 310-0000
Fax: (780) 415-9306

This document is intended primarily for:
System and School Administrators
Alberta Education Executive Team and Managers

And may be of interest to:
Teachers
Parents
Education Stakeholders
Community Members

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1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The report, *Promising Practices in First Nations, Métis and Inuit Education* is part of the ongoing work of Alberta Education's, First Nations, Métis and Inuit Services Branch to identify school based practices that support positive outcomes for First Nations Métis and Inuit (FNMI) students. The in-depth, case studies of two Alberta schools is in direct response Alberta's Commission on Learning (2003) Recommendation #40 supporting an education system that encourages diversity of programming for FNMI students and learns from innovative programs. The two schools highlighted in this report were selected from a total of sixteen pilot schools in the recently completed *First Nations, Métis and Inuit (FNMI) School-Community Learning Environment Project.*

The report provides a literature review of current research in Aboriginal education followed by a background section providing an overview of the project. The literature review provides the foundation for the report as it sets out five common themes found in the research regarding promising practices in Aboriginal education.

School profiles and a summary of individual school performance data provide a backdrop for the review of practices employed in each of the schools. Successful strategies and commonalities of approach are presented in the context of the five research themes. Although approaches varied in each of the schools the following were common to both schools:

FNMI Parent and Community Engagement

- School principals and teachers had primary roles in the development of enhanced relationships with FNMI parents and community, with the principal assuming a definite leadership role.
- FNMI parents and community members were seen as being assets to the school community and their expertise was acknowledged and respected.

FNMI Cultural & Language Programming

- FNMI and non-FNMI students were provided with opportunities to appreciate the richness of FNMI culture and participate in FNMI cultural programming.

Teachers, Instruction and Curriculum/Resources

- School principals felt it was important to attract teachers who were committed to improving outcomes for FNMI students, were flexible and demonstrated the ability to develop positive relationships.
- School principals were interested in increasing the number of FNMI staff within their school environments.

- Principals indicated that for their schools to be truly responsive to the needs of FNMI students it was necessary to go beyond standard procedures to develop relationships, attain cultural knowledge, provide FNMI students with a sense of belonging, encourage literacy, and promote academic success.
- Both schools focused on literacy and meeting the individual needs of their FNMI students.
- A common theme to both schools was creating positive approaches to assist FNMI students with homework.
- Both schools approached complex issues and challenges by doing things differently rather than relying on counter-productive solutions.
- Both schools purchased a wide variety of FNMI resources for their libraries and classrooms.
- Provincial initiatives in infusing FNMI perspectives into curriculum were supported in both school environments.

Professional Development

- Both Le Roi Daniels and St. Francis of Assisi Schools altered their instructional time to provide one half day per week for professional development.
- Schools placed an emphasis on professional development in the area of FNMI education.

Individual Student Support

- Both schools offered enhanced leadership, mentorship and counseling programs for FNMI Students. Programs at Le Roi Daniels were designed for all students where the programs at St. Francis of Assisi were more directed to FNMI students.
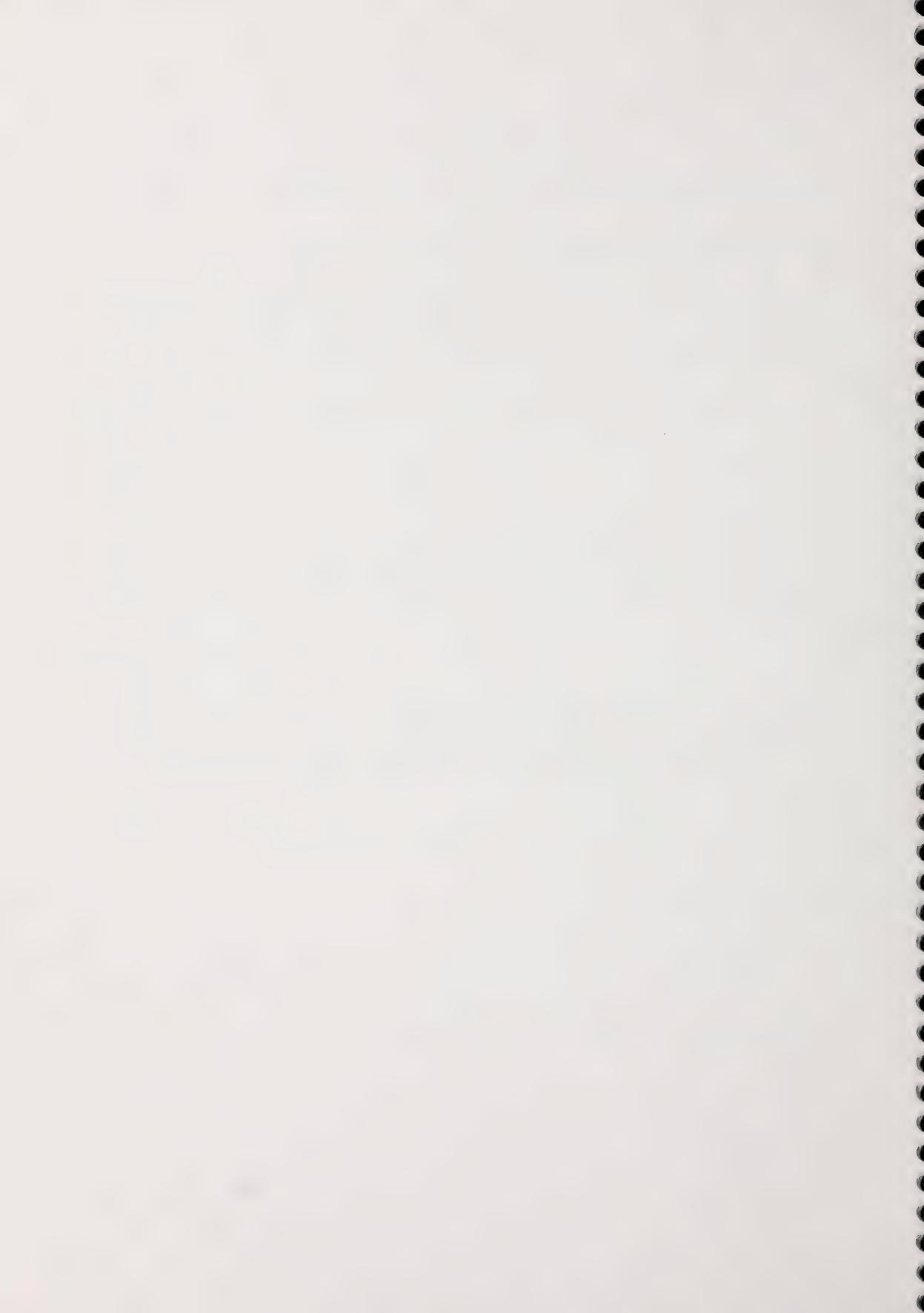
2.   BACKGROUND

2.1   ALBERTA'S COMMISSION ON LEARNING (ACOL)

The report and recommendations of Alberta's Commission on Learning stated that Albertans, in general, care deeply about the education of their children and their future. The report recognized a particular concern about the education of First Nations and Métis children and acknowledged the education of FNMI children and youth as one of the most pressing issues facing Alberta's education system. Of a total fifty-two recommendations, fifteen addressed the area of FNMI education and all fifteen recommendations focused on a single goal – "to ensure Aboriginal children succeed at school and are well prepared for post-secondary education and their future careers" (*ACOL, 2003, p. 84*). Although the Commission noted that there were some positive signs of improvement, the common desire of Aboriginal people, Alberta Education and Albertans was take action to improve results for Aboriginal students. In addressing improvement, the Commission called for diversity in approaches and innovations linked to a clear accountability framework.

ACOL Recommendation #40: *Continue to provide choices for Aboriginal parents for the education of their children.*

The Commission was impressed with the leadership and variety of models in place. These different models should be allowed to flourish, their outcomes should be assessed, and the results should be used to guide decisions. Parents should be able to choose a variety of approaches, some of which provide more separate settings for Aboriginal children and others which are integrated with other public schools. Where parents choose an integrated setting for their children, they may need to assume more responsibility for ensuring their children maintain their language and understanding of their cultures. In some cases, Aboriginal language programs have been developed and are accessible to parents. Provincial standards should be maintained regardless of the particular model of education provided.

The recommendation is a powerful endorsement of the diversity in approaches to FNMI education currently existing in Alberta. Ongoing assessment of outcomes and the use of results to drive decision making is suggested by the Commission as a way to improve the education system.

2.2   FNMI SCHOOL-COMMUNITY LEARNING ENVIRONMENT PROJECT

The First Nations, Métis and Inuit School-Community Learning Environment Project provided support to a total of sixteen pilot schools across Alberta to develop and implement strategies aimed at improving FNMI learner results. The projects were designed to enhance respect and appreciation of FNMI cultures, to identify and alleviate barriers that prevent FNMI learners from fully participating in school, and to increase parental engagement. In partnership and collaboration with the

Alberta Regional Professional Development Consortia and participating school jurisdictions, Alberta Education provided $1.5 million over two years to support sixteen school jurisdictions with significant FNMI populations.

2.3 SCHOOL IDENTIFICATION METHODOLOGY

The identification of two programs/schools for ACOL #40 was based on an outcome approach and a reliance on a wide range of data. The decision was made to focus on current projects in FNMI education in Alberta that would provide a rich environment of statistical data with positive outcomes for FNMI students. The recently completed *FNMI School-Community Learning Environment Project (2004 - 2006)* with its sixteen pilot project schools provided such a statistically rich environment. Although there were a number of schools within the pilot project that produced positive results the decision was made to begin with two schools. The criteria for selection were as follows:

- **Broad Based Outcome Data** – Project data from the pilot schools needed to include FNMI student achievement data, staff / student / parent questionnaire data and completed locally developed measures.

- **Pervasive Positive Outcomes** – Schools were identified based on positive outcomes across the widest number of areas including results from the parent, student, staff satisfaction survey results, Provincial Achievement Exams and Canadian Test of Basic Skills.

- **Number of FNMI Students** – Some consideration was given to the number of FNMI students involved in the pilot projects within each school.

- **FNMI Student Demographics** – The identified schools should serve significantly diverse FNMI student populations.

2.4 LITERATURE REVIEW

The literature available on factors that contribute to FNMI student success in school has increased over the past few years with some common themes emerging. For the purposes of this review these common themes are organized into the following five areas:

- FNMI parent and community engagement
- FNMI cultural & language programming
- Teachers, instruction and curriculum/resources
- Professional development
- Individual student supports

2.4.1 FNMI Parent and Community Engagement

The literature regarding FNMI student success in school suggests a need for strong working partnerships between the school and FNMI parents/community. In a study of 162 small high schools in Alaska, Kleinfield (*1985*) noted that the successful schools had strong alliances between teachers and the community. Successful schools exhibited strong teacher/community partnerships, agreement regarding the theme for the educational program, enterprising teaching staff, and a central office that encouraged adapting schooling to meet local needs.

Mcinerney et al. (*1997*) recognized the importance of relationships and family in schooling for FNMI students noting, "*It is clear from the interviews that the most important influence on school motivation was the family. Teachers were rated second most important and peers were the third. Family involvement in school increases Aboriginal students' chances for educational success*" (p.14).

 Melnechenko and Horsman (1998) stated that the influence of the family is a large determiner in FNMI student success. The authors write that "*Educators have come to know that there is a positive correlation between success at school and positive family influence, support, and relationship*" (p.9). Bazylak (*2002*) concurs, stating that "*Without family involvement Aboriginal students are less likely to succeed in school*" (p.139). Bell (*2004*) in his study of ten Aboriginal schools in Canada also sums up this reoccurring theme in the following statement:

"*The establishment of effective working partnerships between schools, parents and communities is dependent on the formation of a climate of relational trust. Additionally, previous education experiences of parents or community members strongly influence the potential of the school to build effective partnerships. This is particularly significant, given that many Aboriginal communities have had negative experiences in which education was used as a tool of assimilation*" (p.35).

> Clearly schools that can engage FNMI parents/community and develop positive, supportive relationships are more likely to produce positive outcomes for their FNMI students.

2.4.2 FNMI Cultural & Language Programming

FNMI culture and language programs are becoming increasingly common in Alberta schools. A number of schools throughout the province offer second language instruction in Aboriginal languages such as Cree and Blackfoot. Considerable effort has been directed to develop resources and support the implementation of these programs. In addition, a number of schools in the province offer FNMI cultural experiences for FNMI and non-FNMI students. Research tells us that a high level

of congruency between the school environment and the language and the culture of its community is critical to the success of formal learning (*Barnhardt, 1990*).

Demmert (2001) noted that "*Studies conducted in the past 30 years collectively provide strong evidence that Native language and cultural programs—and student identification with such programs—are associated with improved academic performance, decreased dropout rates, improved school attendance rates, decreased clinical symptoms, and improved personal behavior*" (p.16). The presence of culture and language programs in schools is seen as less alien and people in the community are more inclined to become involved in the education process (McLaughlin, 1992).

There is considerable research indicating the positive effects of Aboriginal bilingual and immersion programs. Case studies in three separate Alaskan communities with schools offering bilingual or bicultural classes showed satisfied parents, excellent student attitudes and excellent test scores (*McBeath, McDiarmid, & Shepro, 1982*). A study of four indigenous language programs in New Zealand and Hawaii also produced similar results with decreased dropout rates, increased sense of heritage and identity and improved test scores (*Stiles, 1997*).

> Schools that include cultural and language programming for their FNMI students capitalize on a powerful positive practice supported by current literature.

2.4.3 Teachers, Instruction and Curriculum/Resources

As is the case with all students, classrooms that offer FNMI students engaging educational experiences provide greater opportunities for success. Clearly the most important component of this educational experience is the teacher. Bazylak (2002) notes that teachers who are able to build strong, healthy relationships built on trust and mutual respect play a significant role in the success of FNMI students. This importance is echoed by Melnechenko and Horsman (1998) in their study of factors that contribute to FNMI student success in school in grades 6 to 9. They maintain that "relationship-building is a prerequisite to a positive classroom environment" (p. 12).

Cleary and Peacock (1998) described successful methods and teacher behaviors that work with indigenous students as including:

- the need to build trust,
- to connect with the community,
- to establish cultural relevance in the curriculum,
- to tap intrinsic motivation for learning; to use humor,
- to establish family support,
- to provide situations that yield small successes,

- to make personal connections with students.
- to use highly engaging, activity-based learning and, in some cases, cooperative learning,
- to provide role models; to be flexible, fair, and consistent, and
- to provide real audience and purpose for student work.

McBride & McKee (2001) in reviewing highly successful school jurisdictions in British Columbia noted those districts encouraged teachers to reach out to the FNMI community, recognize cultural diversity within the school culture, and to have expectations for FNMI students in keeping with all other students.

Teachers with low expectations for their FNMI students are seen as having a detrimental impact on the success of these students. Digman, Mroczka, and Brady (1995) note that low teacher expectations and counseling of FNMI students into vocationally oriented curricula have been identified as factors contributing to student attrition. Bazylak (2002) in a study of successful FNMI high school students noted that *"the participants revealed high teacher expectations as a factor that encouraged their success in school"* (p. 147) but qualified this by indicating that the teacher needed, however, to ensure there was room for flexibility in their expectations.

In addition to the successful characteristics noted above, research suggests that FNMI teachers can play an important role in the educational success of FNMI youth. Mackay and Myles (1995), in a discussion of FNMI retention and dropout rates, identify FNMI teachers and/or assistants as an important support for FNMI students in high school. The authors go on to say "*schools in which Native students enjoy a high rate of success are those with principals who actively promote strategies for maximizing the academic success of all their students. The principals of such schools have successfully recruited Native teachers and/or assistants".(p. 174)* Kanu (2003) in a study of teacher' perceptions of the integration of FNMI culture into the high school curriculum noted the unique contribution FNMI teachers/assistants made toward meaningful integration of FNMI perspectives. The author concluded: *"The provincial government must work in concert with faculties of education to put more effort and resources into the training and hiring of Aboriginal teachers" (p.63).*

> Schools that hire teachers who have high/flexible expectations and are able to build strong, healthy teacher/student relationships built on trust and mutual respect have a greater chance of success in the education of their FNMI students. In addition to the successful characteristics noted above, research suggests that FNMI teachers can play an important role in the educational success of FNMI youth.

Demmert *(2001)* states *"Successful classroom teachers are able to organize their classes and adjust their teaching strategies in a way that motivates, engages, and challenges students to learn. An often unrecognized factor that influences these organizational skills and teaching strategies is the cultural context in which learning takes place. A growing body of research reports on the positive aspects of including the language and cultural base of the Native community served as a necessary characteristic of successful schools" (p. 18).* Other researchers have looked more specifically at instructional factors that have a positive influence on FNMI student achievement. Brancov *(1994)* suggested that an informal classroom organization, culturally relevant material and group work produced positive results.

McCarty *(1991)* suggested that changing the classroom learning environment to support open-ended questioning, inductive/analytic reasoning, and student participation in a cultural context resulted in increased student participation. In addition, flexible furniture arrangements, group work, shared locus of control by teachers and pupils, cooperative learning, collaborative group work and increased opportunities for dialogue all have been identified as having a positive impact on FNMI student success.

Garrett (2003) in discussing the cultural discontinuity of Native American students in schools had a number of suggestions to improve classroom practice. Suggestions included the following.

- Introduce more opportunities for visual and oral learning styles.
- Use culturally relevant materials when possible.
- Respect family and tribe-related absences.
- Invite Native American mentors, such as Elders from the community.
- Encourage peer tutoring and cooperative group learning approaches to emphasize cooperation and sharing.
- Practice inter-group competition (rather than individual competition) in the classroom.
- Stress short-term goals oriented more to the present with traditional Native students.
- Model behaviors and skills, with an emphasis on personal choice, to help Native American students distinguish which behaviors are appropriate for which situation.

Garrett goes on to give the following advice to school service professionals working with Native youth; *"determine (a) the degree of cultural commitment; (b) whether the youth comes from a reservation or rural or urban setting; and (c) what tribal structure, customs, and beliefs are relevant to the situation in order to determine the presence and magnitude of cultural discontinuity". (p. 233)*

> Classrooms that have culturally relevant materials, are informal in nature, encourage cooperative learning /group work, support open-ended questioning, inductive/analytic reasoning and student participation, produce positive results for their FNMI students.

The lack of FNMI cultural knowledge and perspectives in the school curriculum and among teachers has been identified as a significant factor in school failure, promoting calls for the inclusion of FNMI cultural perspective across school curricula and teacher education programs (Binda, 2001: McAlpine, 2001). Considerable work has been undertaken in Alberta in order to provide classroom teachers with culturally appropriate FNMI content across the curriculum. Currently the infusion of FNMI perspectives into Alberta's Programs of Study is underway. In addition the Aboriginal Studies 10/20/30 program provides high schools in Alberta with a unique opportunity to provide meaningful, culturally relevant programs to their FNMI and non-FNMI students.

Kanu *(2005)* in a study of the integration of FNMI culture into the high school curriculum endorses the current initiative in Alberta stating; *"Curriculum development units must include Aboriginal culture, content, issues, topics and perspectives as an integral part of the school curriculum in every subject area". (p. 12)*

Aikenhead and Huntley (1999) further suggest that teachers who want to help FNMI students through the integration of FNMI perspectives into the school curriculum must be provided with the appropriate instructional resources to do so.

Starnes (*2006*) succinctly states; *"Whether the approach is referred to as culturally responsive, "nativized," place-based, culturally infused , or "bottom-up," an astonishing amount of data illustrates that when students' culture is "tapped" in the classroom, it "build(s) a bridge to school success".(p. 3)*

> The infusion of FNMI culture, issues and perspectives across the curriculum and access to appropriate instructional resources to support this infusion are integral to FNMI student success.

2.4.4 Professional Development

Current research in FNMI education recognizes that the majority of teachers feel ill-prepared to meet the emerging demands regarding the education of FNMI students. Starnes (2006) in discussing lessons learned as a white teacher teaching Indian children on the Chippewa-Cree reservation in northern Montana noted;

> "The first (lesson) is how very little we know about the ways Native American children learn. We don't recognize the chasm that exists between their needs and our traditionally accepted curricula and

methods. The second is how difficult it is for even the most skilled and dedicated white teachers to teach well when we know so little about the history, culture, and communities in which we teach – and when what we do know has been derived from a white education. In such cases, solid teaching skills, good intentions, hard work, and loving the kids just aren't enough.   There is too much we don't know about teaching Native American children and what we don't know definitely hurts them." (p. 2)

Although there is an increase in culturally appropriate content available to teachers there has been little research on teachers' perceptions of the integration of FNMI cultural knowledge and perspectives into school curriculum. Kanu (2005) in a study of ten high school teachers' perceptions of the integration of FNMI cultural knowledge and perspectives into the teaching of the Manitoba high school curriculum noted that:

> "Although these teachers were unanimous in their agreement that the social studies curriculum was assimilating Aboriginal students through omission or token additions of Aboriginal perspectives, they unwittingly contributed to this process of assimilation by allowing the curriculum topics, not Aboriginal issues/perspective, to remain at the center of their teaching. The teachers perceived integration as occasionally adding Aboriginal perspectives, where convenient, to a curriculum that remained largely Eurocentric". (p. 6)

Kanu (2005) provides ten recommendations to assist policymakers and educators to successfully integrate FNMI perspectives into curriculum; the first recommendation being;

> "School and faculties of education should provide opportunities for all teachers, non-Aboriginal and Aboriginal alike, to learn about Aboriginal culture, issues, and perspectives.   This is best done through pre-service teacher education program and in schools, through professional development opportunities for practicing teachers and the utilization of the expertise of Aboriginal community members.   In both routes, priority should be given to educating teachers about Aboriginal issues, Aboriginal pedagogical practices and social interaction patterns, particular ways that varying groups of Aboriginal students best learn background knowledge about Aboriginal students in teachers' classrooms, and support systems for Aboriginal student learning in the public school system". (P. 12)

Clearly, to be successful, schools require access to superior professional development programs that engage teachers in meaningful experiences regarding FNMI culture, issues, and perspectives.

2.4.5 Individual Student Supports

Planning for student transitions and ongoing services to individuals within the school setting are important factors to FNMI student success. Reyhner (1992) in reviewing research regarding drop out rates of FNMI students noted that dropout prevention included support services outside of the classroom from school administrators and counselors who work closely with parents. Schools across Alberta provide a service safety net to assist students with a wide variety of issues ranging from frequent transitions, to issues of poverty and school alienation. Approaches include extensive transition planning, on-site counseling and social work, leadership and mentorship programming and the utilization of a holistic approach to the education. These interventions are important to ensure success for FNMI students.

Transition Planning

Many FNMI students struggle with transitions from one educational level to the next; from rural to urban settings; from one school to another and the initial transition from home to early childhood programs. St. Germaine, (1995) linked high drop out rates of Aboriginal students at the high school level in America to obstacles faced during the transition to these schools. The author supports the notion that a cultural discontinuity exists for students raised and schooled in a distinctive culture of their own being thrust into a school system that promotes the values of the majority culture. If the resulting clash of cultures continues, the minority child may feel forced to choose one culture at the expense of the other.

This is often the situation in Alberta where FNMI students attend on-reserve schools for elementary and junior high school years and then is moved to a provincial school for the high school years. Wilson (*1991*) in a study of Canadian FNMI students observes that "upon entering the large predominantly white high school, they (FNMI students) faced racial prejudice, isolation, low expectations of teachers, and a structure which appeared to them to have been designed for their failure, and they failed, practically overnight". (p. 371) St. Germaine (*1995*) provided educators with a number of promising practices that would increase successful transitions some of the more significant recommendations were to:

- avoid large comprehensive high schools,
- encourage positive teacher-student interactions,
- recruit more FNMI teachers

- encourage active learning strategies where students are encouraged to interact with peers, instructors, and their environment,
- use a culturally relevant curriculum,
- use assessment for learning approaches,
- hold high expectations, and
- increased parental involvement

The Australian education system, like our Alberta system is seeking appropriate strategies to enhance the learning and teaching of FNMI students. Dockett (2004) in a study of successful transitions to school of young Aboriginal students in the Australian *Starting School Research Project* describes a common desire on the part of Aboriginal parents for their children which encourages a positive start to school and instills enthusiasm to succeed at school. The author noted that Aboriginal children and families can approach this transition as not merely a one-way journey towards something better, but a period of two way interactions ensuring that the child's culture is not left behind. Dockett (2004) identified a number of elements in schools that supported this first transition from home to school significant elements included:

- A visible Aboriginal presence at the school
- Opportunities to express and maintain their Aboriginal identity.
- Strategies to invite families and communities into the school and value their involvement
- Flexibility to encourage family-school connections
- Respect for Aboriginal families and the strengths they embody
- Access to mainstream educational curricula, complemented by opportunities to engage with Aboriginal languages and culture
- High expectations of the learning capabilities of Aboriginal children
- Flexibility of organization
- Access to appropriate health services
- Opportunities to view school as a worthwhile and positive place.

Issues of Poverty

Many FNMI students are faced with issues associated with poverty that impede their success at school. School administrators, counselors, Aboriginal liaison workers and school based social workers are well aware of the impact of poverty on FNMI students and many schools go beyond a narrow definition of education to assist students and families. St. Germaine (1995) in reviewing dropout rates among American Indian and Alaska native students concluded that a significant factor in the high drop out rate, beyond cultural discontinuity for these students, was the conflict caused by maintaining societal arrangements that produce substantial poverty within a nation of affluence and concentrate such poverty in certain groups, including American Indians and Alaska Natives.

Developing a Sense of Belonging

Sherman & Sherman, (1990) make a case for the development of school environments that are personal in nature, with small class and program size, low pupil-teacher ratios, program autonomy, and a supportive school environment to decrease student dropout rates. The authors noted that many students who have not met with success in the regular school program have been alienated by large, bureaucratic systems that do not respond to their unique needs. Reyhner (1992) suggests that smaller schools can allow a greater percentage of students to participate in extra- curricular activities. Students participating in these activities, especially sports when excessive travel is not required, drop out less frequently. Reyher (1992) goes on to suggest that it is essential that schools working with FNMI students need to recruit teachers that take an individual interest in their students and are warm, supportive and caring in nature. When classroom environments are inviting and respectful of First Nations, Métis and Inuit cultural values, students are more likely to be successful. A significant factor to student success is creating a classroom where students believe they belong (Whitbeck, 2001 and Coggins, 1997)

Mentorship Programs

Jackson (2003) in reviewing the reasons for the success of fifteen Native American college students highlighted the positive impact of structured mentoring programs that connected advanced Native American students with beginning students. This may be another means of addressing the potential isolation of Native American students on campuses. The authors found that structured mentoring programs had the potential to mitigate the potentially negative influences of friends and provided students with role models for reconciling the conflicting pressures inherent in developing a bicultural identity.

Planning for student transitions and ongoing services to individuals within the school setting are important factors to FNMI student success. Transition planning, on-site counseling and social work, leadership and mentorship programs are examples of wrap around services that support FNMI learners.

3.   SCHOOL #1: ST. FRANCIS OF ASSISI ELEMENTARY SCHOOL
      JURISDICTION: EDMONTON CATHOLIC SEPARATE SCHOOL DISTRICT
      NO.7

3.1   SCHOOL PROFILE

St. Francis of Assisi School is a small school located in Northeast Edmonton and is part of the Edmonton Catholic Separate School District No. 7. The school student population is approximately 265 from diverse cultural and linguistic backgrounds. Although the school is not technically an 'inner city school', it does have many of the community characteristics of an inner city school. The needs of the students attending St. Francis of Assisi are significant enough for the school to qualify for a school lunch and snack program.

St. Francis of Assisi is a large school site that was formerly a K-9 school. The school has two gymnasiums, a large well resourced library, new computers, individual classroom mini libraries, and a well developed leveled reading program with significant print resources. In addition to the regular elementary program the school houses two special education classes for students with developmental delays, a Community Daycare, an ABC Head Start Program, and an Adult Education Program (Adult ESL and LINC) and Department of Life Long Learning (Edmonton Catholic Schools).

The school has 140 FNMI students, making it the second largest FNMI student population in Edmonton Catholic Schools. The FNMI population of the school has grown steadily over the last four years, especially with the introduction of a Cree Bilingual Kindergarten/Grade 1 program during the 2004/2005 school year. Sixty-eight of the students attending St. Francis of Assisi School are designated as students with a severe disability, thirty of whom qualifying for assistance due to behavioral difficulties. The school reports a 35% transience rate with FMNI transfers due to moves out of Edmonton or to city communities where travel to St. Francis of Assisi is prohibitive. The school reports a very solid base of FNMI families who send their children to the school on an ongoing basis.

3.2   DATA EVALUATION AND RESULTS

3.2.1 Parent Survey Highlights:
Post – Test Satisfaction Survey Results

The parent surveys measured the degree of satisfaction of parents with the operations of the school, the inclusion of FNMI culture in the school environment and overall school culture.

Approximately 42 FNMI parents completed the post-test parent survey. High levels of FNMI parent satisfaction were expressed on the post-test questionnaire in the following areas:

Survey Item	Positive Result
I feel welcome at school	90.2%
School is a safe environment	85.7%
Caring environment	92.9%
Developing Positive Attitude	85.7%
Helping child learn to best of ability	92.9%
Participation in parent – teacher interviews	85.7%
Comfortable discussing important issues with my child's teacher	93.0%
Comfortable discussing with administration	88.4%

3.2.2 Student Survey Highlights:
Post – Test Satisfaction Survey Results

The student surveys provided opportunities for student to respond in a variety of areas including:

- perceptions of the school environment,
- social relationships,
- school norms,
- cultural awareness,
- self estrangement, and
- student successes

In total of 26 FNMI students completed the post-test survey. FNMI students expressed high levels of positive response on the post-test survey in the following areas:

Survey Item	Positive Result
Learning about other cultures	92.4%
Express religious beliefs	88.4%
Adults help me	88.5%
Staff treat me fairly	88.5%
Feel welcome	88.0%
Teachers listen	88.4%
Teachers are fair	92.0%
Attending school is important	100 %
Interesting things to do at school	84.6%
Get good marks	80.8%

Family wants me to do well	100 %
Teachers want me to do well	100 %
Get along with most students	88.5%
People respect me	92.3%
Happy most of the time	80.0%
Usually successful	96.2%
Feel I belong	92.3%
Have Friends	96.1%

3.2.3 Staff Survey Highlights

Teacher and administrator surveys looked at the effects of the project in general, specific effects on students, self-efficacy, satisfaction with supports provided them, and perceptions of barriers to FNMI success. Support staff surveys focused on two factors, perceptions of the school environment and self-efficacy. A total of 30 surveys were returned for analysis. The following are selected survey results:

Survey Question	Teaching Staff	Support Staff
My school is helping FNMI students develop positive attitudes toward school.	100%	100%
All students' benefit when FNMI culture and traditions are incorporated in the school.	100%	95%
I can have an impact on FNMI students Academic Success.	100%	95%
My school has resources to support the delivery of a responsive FNMI curriculum.	91%	95%

3.2.4 Provincial Achievement Test Results

St. Francis of Assisi participates in the Provincial Achievement testing program at grades three and six. Results comparing FNMI and non-FNMI students at St. Francis of Assisi from 2002 to 2005 were included in the schools final report for the FNMI School - Community Learning Environment Project.

A review of this data suggests that FNMI students although slightly behind their non-FNMI counterparts have made some gains in the past three years. In addition the school has reported high participation rates (87.5% - 100%) for FNMI students on these exams.

Total school results on the multiyear (2001-2005) reports suggest some consistent gains at the acceptable standard in Grade 6 Science, Mathematics, and Social Studies. Results at the Grade 3 level and Grade 6 English Language Arts, although positive, are less consistent.

3.2.5 Canadian Test of Basic Skills

As part of the School – Community Learning Environment Project all students (Gr. 1 – Gr. 5) were administered the Canadian Test of Basic Skills. Results indicate slight differences between FNMI and Non-FNMI students on all test measures with the largest differences being in the Language subtest. FNMI students at the grade one level slightly outperformed their non-FNMI counterparts on all subtests whereas the opposite was true at the Grade 5 level. Results for grades 2 through 4 were mixed. These results may suggest that the school program at St. Francis of Assisi produces relatively equal outcomes for FNMI and non-FNMI students as measured by this test instrument.

3.3   POSITIVE PRACTICES

3.3.1 FNMI Parent and Community Engagement

Principal/Administration

- Increased principal's administrative time to establish relationships with parent/community.
- Principal is available to parents without the need for an appointment.
- Principal has been at the school for seven years so is familiar with families and extended families.
- Principal makes home visits or will meet parents at a neutral site (coffee shop etc.) The school has a scheduled "Tea and Bannock with the Principal" social on a regular basis.
- Two or three FNMI parents are on school council (very flexible group, meet every second month)
- Principal has a group of about twenty FNMI parents (think tank) that he can go to in order to get advice (does this usually one to one).

FNMI Liaison

- A full-time community liaison person provides on-site support to FNMI students, connects with students/families, supports school staff, and accesses appropriate resources for enhanced school programming
- FNMI liaison staff is not the only or primary contact with parents. The administration and teachers are to be active participants in maintaining face to face contact with parents with the FNMI liaison assisting them in this role.

School Staff

- The importance of building positive relationships with parents is made very clear to all staff. Staff is challenged to build relationships on their own through face to face contact with parents.
- Teaching staff is expected to make a first contact with all parents of students within the first two weeks of school.
- Teaching staff is encouraged to make home visits.

School Environment

- The school building is open and students/parents can come into the building prior to school opening in the morning.
- Parents are encouraged to remain at the school after they drop off their children for the day.
- Parents are encouraged to drop into classes to watch what teachers are doing – and talk to teachers.
- Parents can contact their children at any time, go to the classrooms, bring lunches in or talk to their children – not an overabundance of access rules.
- Parents are personally invited to attend monthly assemblies and awards presentations.
- Parents are invited to watch their children play on school teams or clubs and are assisted with transportation if required.
- Cree Bilingual Kindergarten/ Gr. 1 program has brought FNMI parents into the school on an informal basis.
- Informal gatherings without specific agendas seem to have the best results in terms of participation and satisfaction.

3.3.2 FNMI Cultural & Language Programming

Cree Bilingual Language Program

- St. Francis of Assisi offers a Cree Bilingual Program to students in kindergarten and grade 1.
- The program will be extended to grade 2 for the 2006/2007 school year.
- The students learn the Cree language and Cree cultural activities through smudge ceremonies, prayers, songs, and stories.
- FNMI dancers, elders and speakers are invited into the classroom to provide cultural experiences.
- The children concentrated on the development of the oral Cree language.
- In the grade 1 program children are introduced to the Cree alphabet and they begin reading in Cree.
- FNMI parents have formed their own parent support group for the Cree Bilingual Program to assist the school and the program.

Cultural Programs

- Staff from Aboriginal Learning Services (Edmonton Catholic Schools) provided a wide range of cultural programs and instruction to students. Tremendous role models contribute – "seen almost as rock stars by student body".
- This year the school worked to combine the school district's core values with tipi teachings. Respect has been the first core value being implemented which is also represented by a pole of the tipi. All teaching staff made a tipi for the classroom and we will have a full sized tipi in the courtyard.

3.3.3 Teachers, Instruction and Curriculum/Resources

Teachers

- Staff at the school care about their students. Staff members are positive about their ability to make a difference and have high expectations for their students. Although the school has not had preferential staffing it has been supported by the school district to ensure that staff at the school is committed to the school vision and goals.
- St. Francis of Assisi has made an effort to hire FNMI staff, for the 2005-2006 school years. There were three FNMI teachers (total teaching staff of 18) and seven FNMI support staff (total support staff of 26)
- The school wants to attract individuals who are:

  - warm, compassionate,
  - non-judgmental,
  - passionate about their job - wanting to make a difference,
  - willing to engage students on a personal level – not standoffish,
  - demonstrating the ability to develop relationships with others,
  - FNMI or non-FNMI staff with knowledge or ties to the FNMI community, and
  - able to speak Cree.

- Consideration for principal characteristics were presented the following:

  - Experience and knowledge of the school system a given,
  - Passion - for making a difference,
  - Flexible –not ridged, linear,
  - Compassionate, empathetic, considerate person,
  - A strong cultural background or understanding of Culture,
  - A respect for diversity,
  - Understanding of approaches to minority group education,

- And, a person who understands:
  - Family
  - Extended family
  - Ceremony
  - Talking (things are done without talking)
  - Certain community members are automatically respected
  - Elders
  - Celebration

Climate for Learning

- The creation of a climate of safety, trust and relationship was a primary focus.
- School moved to higher expectations for students and a series of supports to assist teachers.
- Focus on learning, and the completion of the curriculum.
- The school is committed to continuous improvement. Our students are showing slow but steady improvement each year.
- Building relationships with student.
- The school changed its start time to later in the day to decrease the number of students who were arriving late for school.
- An emphasis on providing one to one services to students when required.

Support for Teaching and Learning

- Teachers support helps all students to reach their potential. Support means resources, teacher assistants, support staff and the school administration.
- New teaching staff is encouraged to attend appropriate in-service programs.
- School is committed to developing a resource rich school to assist the teachers' programs for a wide range of students.
- Special needs assistants are available to assist teachers with special needs students.
- The school has extra resource staff (support teachers) to assist students academically.
- Administration and support teachers are able to assist students to "catch up" if they are away from school. Students are not dumped into a classroom when they return to school from being away, they are carefully reintroduced. In addition certified support teachers can "pull out" small groups of students to work on specific skills.
- Additional funding (FNMI funding and funding for coded students) has provided administration with a more flexible timetable without being tied to a classroom.

Assessment for Learning

- The staff is committed to an "Assessment for Learning" approach in determining student needs. They have implemented a series of tests over the last four years in addition to Edmonton Catholic's district wide assessments.
- Teachers use assessment for program planning. These students then receive extra support in the classroom.
- School has set aside resources to access required specialists (psychologists, etc.) for specialized student testing and program development.

Literacy

- Two hours of uninterrupted time set aside each day for literacy instruction.
- Due to the nature of the students at the school and the number of students that required assistance the school developed an approach to literacy with a capacity to assist a large number of students with multiple needs.
- Conducts pre/post testing program – then teaching to level.
- The school reorganized its resource room program, reading recovery program and ESL program and used staff to support a new broad based literacy initiative. Support students in classrooms and provide one to one assistance to students based on need.
- School received extra funding from the school system (approx. $150,000 over three years) as a "Learning Initiatives for Everyone (LIFE) focus school". This provided funding for an extensive multi-level reading program and resources that allow for students to operate in the same room at a variety of different levels in texts that appear to be the same.

Homework

- School tries to set students up for success not failure – break the homework not done – avoidance – punishment – negative approach.
- Homework is assigned to students – especially during the week – not weekends. Approach to encourage the completion of homework
- Homework rooms/areas are made available to students on a voluntary basis before and after school to provide a quiet place for students to complete their homework.
- A homework voucher system to reward students who have their homework completed (gymnasium/computer lab)
- Usage of homework room is higher in the winter than summer and was used by more students a few years ago when it was first introduced. Students seem to have less need to access these areas during the last few years.

Curriculum/ Resources

- The school has purchased a wide variety of reading materials either about FNMI people or by FNMI authors for the school library and classrooms in support of the literacy initiative.
- The school has a long history of infusing FNMI perspectives into curriculum and is supportive of new provincial initiatives in social studies and other content areas.
- A resource listing is available from the school upon request.

3.3.4 Professional Development

- The school operates on a four and a half day week with a half day per week for a weekly professional development program.
- There has been a significant emphasis on FNMI related professional development topics with the majority of workshops offered by staff from Aboriginal Learning Services (Edmonton Catholic Schools).
- The staff of St. Frances of Assisi has had many workshops in FNMI Education over the past five years.

3.3.5 Individual Student Supports

- Staff from the Aboriginal Learning Services (Edmonton Catholic Schools) has offered a number of student leadership and mentorship programs at the school.
- An FNMI student summer program was offered to students last summer through the Braided Journeys Program developed by Edmonton Catholic Schools.
- Currently, the school is running an FNMI dance group for students.
- Great relationship builder and excellent way to participate in the culture.
- On-site FNMI Elder provides counseling services to FNMI students and families within a cultural context.
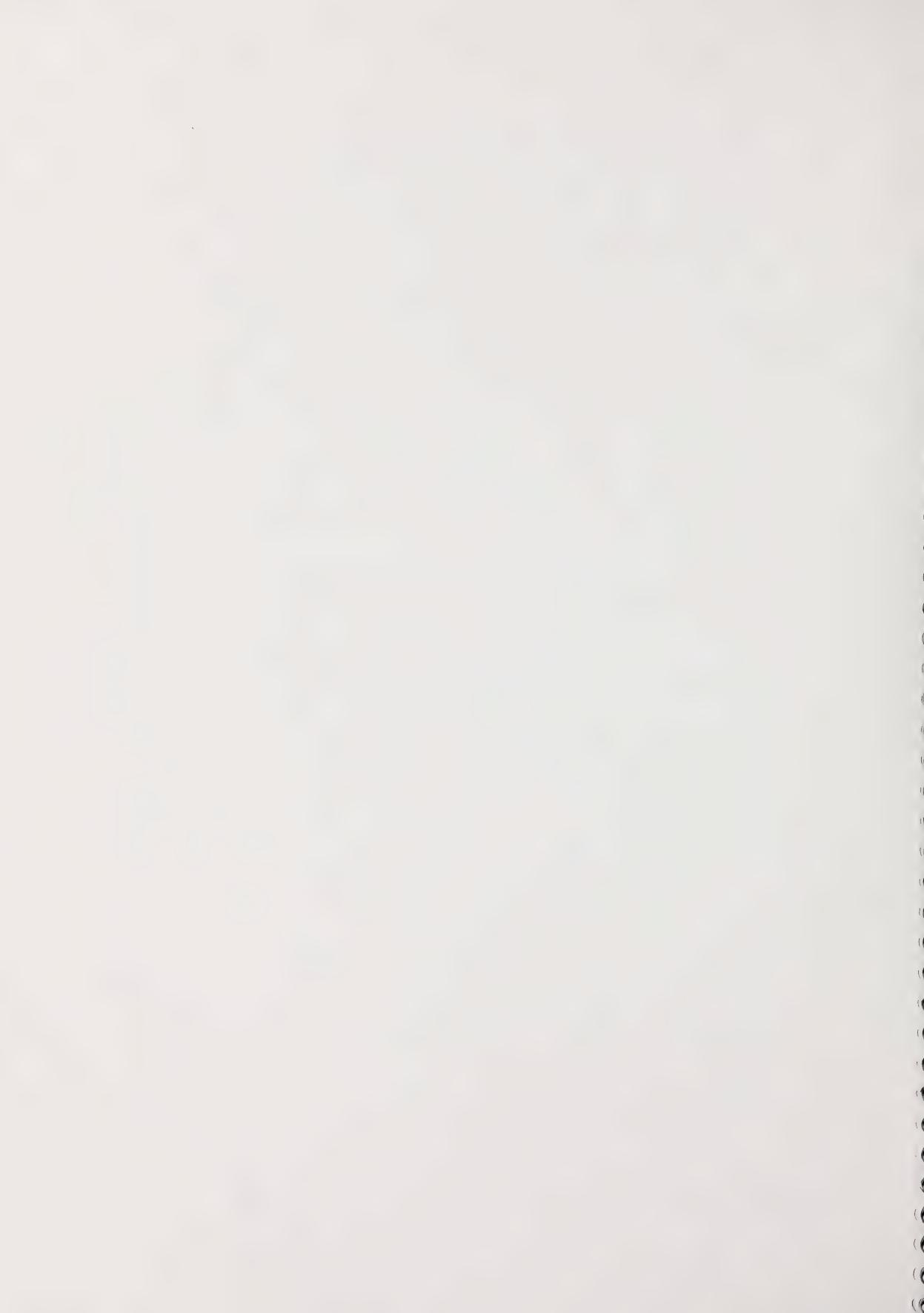
4.   SCHOOL #2: LE ROI DANIELS ELEMENTARY

School Jurisdiction: Calgary School District #19

4.1   SCHOOL PROFILE

Le Roi Daniels Elementary School is a small elementary school located in southeast Calgary and is part of the Calgary Board of Education. The school is located in Fairview Community, an older area of Calgary that is beginning to develop the some of the characteristics of an inner city community including declining enrolment. The addition of a program of choice - the "Traditional Learning Centre" (TLC) with an emphasis on a more conventional approach to learning, resulted in an influx of students from outside the immediate community thereby assisting the viability of the school.

The school has a student population of 350 students, half of whom participate in the regular community based program and the remainder in the TLC program. The school serves a very diverse community with students attending from the immediate neighborhood of Fairview, Tsuu T'ina First Nation and the TLC program that draws students from all over south Calgary. Students are transported to school on a daily basis by a total of twenty-six buses. Student mobility is fairly low in both programs within the school.

Students in the TLC program are students whose parents want a more structured "Back to Basics" approach to education, including student uniforms. Many families in the TLC program are from visible ethnic minorities. Students in the regular elementary program do not wear uniforms; have a broader range of abilities, with a larger number of special needs students. Of the 175 students in the regular community based elementary program, approximately 70 students are from Tsuu T'ina First Nations Community located southwest of Calgary. The FNMI population at the school has grown steadily. Over the past three years FNMI students at the school are enrolled in the regular elementary program. There is a wide variance in socio-economic status among families sending their children to the school due to the dual track education program.

4.2   DATA EVALUATION AND RESULTS

4.2.1 Parent Survey:
Post – Test Satisfaction Survey Results

The parent surveys measured the degree of satisfaction of parents with the operations of the school, the inclusion of FNMI culture in the school environment and overall school culture. Approximately eleven FNMI parents completed the post-test parent survey. High levels of FNMI parent satisfaction were expressed on the post-test questionnaire in the following areas:

Survey Item	Positive Result
I feel welcome at school	81.8%
School is a safe environment	100%
School is a caring environment	81.8%
Developing positive attitude	100%
Participation in parent – teacher interviews	100%
Have participated in school events	81.8%
Opportunity to provide input	81.8%
Comfortable discussing important issues with my child's teacher	100%
Overall satisfaction with learning environment	100%
Opportunity to be involved in decisions	100%

4.2.2 Student Survey:

Post – Test Satisfaction Survey Results

The student surveys provided opportunities for students to respond in a variety of areas including:

- Perceptions of the school environment
- Social relationships
- School norms
- Cultural awareness
- Self estrangement
- Student successes

In total, ten FNMI students completed the post-test survey. FNMI students expressed high levels of positive response on the post-test survey in the following areas:

Survey Item	Positive Result
Learning about other cultures	100%
Express religious beliefs	80%
Adults help me	90%
Staff treat me fairly	90%
Feel welcome	80%
Teachers listen	80%

Teachers are fair	80%
Helping FNMI develop positive attitudes toward school	90%
Attending school is important	100 %
Interesting things to do at school	90%
Get good marks	100%
Family wants me to do well	100 %
Teachers want me to do well	90 %
People respect me	90%
Usually successful	90%
Feel I belong	80%
Have friends	90%

4.2.3 Staff Survey Highlights

Teacher and administrator surveys looked at the effects of the project in general, specific effects on students, self-efficacy, and satisfaction with the supports provided to them, along with perceptions of barriers to FNMI success. Support staff surveys focused on two factors, perceptions of the school environment and self-efficacy.

A total of 19 surveys were returned for analysis. The following are selected survey results:

Survey Question	Teaching Staff	Support Staff
My school is helping FNMI students develop positive attitudes toward school	93%	100%
All students' benefit when FNMI culture and traditions are incorporated in the school	100%	100%
I can have an impact on FNMI students academic success	100%	100%
My school has resources to support the delivery of a responsive FNMI curriculum	100%	80%

4.2.4 Provincial Achievement Test Results

Le Roi Daniels Elementary School participates in the Provincial Achievement testing program at grades 3 and 6. Results comparing FNMI and non- FNMI students at Le Roi Daniels from 2000 to 2005 were included in the schools final report for the FNMI School - Community Learning Environment Project. A review of the this data does not produce a specific pattern regarding the success rate of FNMI students

on the exams although even with the relatively small numbers of FNMI students, high participation rates during the last three years are notable.

Total school results on the multiyear (2001 - 2005) reports suggest some fluctuation in results from year to year at the grade 6 level. Grade 3 results seem to be consistent and positive.

4.2.5 Canadian Test of Basic Skills

As part of the School – Community Learning Environment Project all students (Gr. 1 – Gr. 6) at Le Roi Daniels School were administered the Canadian Test of Basic Skills. Results indicate slight differences between FNMI and non-FNMI students at the Grade 1 level with the gap between the two groups widening on all subtests for older students.

4.3   POSITIVE PRACTICES

4.3.1 FNMI Parent and Community Engagement
Principal/Administration

- The principal is actively involved in developing a positive relationship with the parents of FNMI students and the Tsuu Tina First Nations Community.
- The principal works closely with parents and the leadership of Tsuu Tina First Nations Community to identify and address issues and barriers to success.
- The principal makes regular good news phone calls home to develop positive relationships with parents.

Increased Interaction

- Increased direct interactions between staff/parents/Tsuu Tina First Nations Community.
- A contact person from the Tsuu Tina Board of Education assists school with planning, parent contact and organization.
- School personnel meet with individual parents at the Band Office on-reserve on occasion rather than always at the school.
- Regular lunch hour FNMI parent gatherings are held at the Band Office on-reserve.
- One set of parent teacher interviews were held on the Tsuu Tina First Nations Community during the 2005-2006 school year.
- Bus transportation is provided to parents by First Nations Community for interviews and concerts, etc.
- The staff of Le Roi Daniels School took a bus tour of the Tsuu Tina First Nations Community.
- FNMI parents are encouraged to volunteer at the school.

- School provided curriculum nights at the Tsuu T'ina First Nations Community. The most successful evening was when the school brought samples of student work rather than engaging in a formal curriculum presentation.

Use of Parent Expertise

- The school developed a listing of First Nations parent presenters available to the school.
- Elders from Tsuu T'ina First Nations Community available to the school.
- Tsuu T'ina First Nations Community members provide cultural in-services to school staff.

FNMI Liaison

- FNMI on-site school liaison is a full-time liaison person who provides on-site support to FNMI students (social/emotional/academic), connects with students/ families, and supports school staff.
- FNMI liaison is not seen as the only or primary connection to the Tsuu T'ina First Nations community but more of a member of a team involved in developing relationships.

4.3.2 FNMI Cultural and Language Programs

Language Programs

- Currently there is no FNMI language programming offered at Le Roi Daniels School.

Cultural Programming

- National Aboriginal Day Pow Wow (June 21st)
- Elders from our First Nations Community offered presentations to all students regarding culture and history of FNMI people in the area.
- Bus tour of First Nations Community.
- Drumming instruction / Round dances.
- Bulletin boards with an FNMI focus.
- The entire student body is provided with opportunities to celebrate FNMI traditions and culture.
- Virtue of the month (whole school).
- Dance programs.
- Multicultural focus to many school celebrations.
- Work in this area has had some very positive results in terms of how FNMI students feel about themselves. They are very proud to be First Nations!

4.3.3 Teachers, Instruction and Curriculum/Resources

Teachers
- No FNMI teaching staff and one support staff (FNMI liaison worker) on staff for the 2005-2006 school year. Increasing the number of FNMI staff is seen as being positive.
- Currently the principal looks for individuals who are:
  - committed to FNMI education and FNMI students,
  - committed to differentiating instruction to meet individual needs of students, and
  - demonstrates the ability to develop strong positive relationships.

Instructional Approach
- Le Roi Daniels has made a commitment to differentiated instruction in order to meet the diverse needs of its student population. It is felt that this approach has much to offer FNMI students.

Literacy
- Focus on literacy – school is hoping to provide increased in-class teacher assistant support to FNMI students during the upcoming year.
- FNMI students are exposed to Animated Literacy in K4 and K5 at Tsuu Tina First Nations prior to coming to Le Roi Daniels, - school has continued with this program, including:
  - guided reading in classrooms,
  - animated literacy approach,
  - and the purchase of City of Calgary library cards for interested FNMI families living on-reserve who are not eligible for free library passes.

Homework
- Established a homework club at school (did not work well)
- Worked with the band to establish a supervised homework club at the arena (on reserve) each night for about one hour as students waited to transfer busses. Staffed by the Band.
- Band also offered a tutoring service in math and reading, at the arena, in conjunction with the supervised homework club.
- No longer assign as much homework as the school used to due to a better understanding of the time realities for on-reserve students.
- FNMI liaison and FNMI teacher coordinator provided extra support to students at lunch time.
- Communicated regularly with parents regarding homework.

Curriculum Resources
- The school has purchased a wide variety of FNMI resources for the library.
- Resources are integrated into the library.

- Large bins of leveled FNMI resources are available for guided reading (sets of ten) - Eagle Crest Books – used in the classrooms.
- FNMI novels and other resources available to classrooms.
- Incorporated an idea from another School-Community Learning Environment Project school. Purchased and distributed kindergarten welcome packages which contain chalk, a small chalk board, scissors, good quality books, pencil crayons, etc.

4.3.4 Professional Development
- School has early dismissal each Friday due to banking of time. This has created opportunities for professional development.
- Professional development programs have been provided by a wide variety of presenters including the staff from First Nations, Métis and Inuit Services (Calgary Board of Education) along with individuals from Tsuu Tina First Nations.
- Sample of Topics:
  o Social Evolution – History of Indigenous People
  o Professional development resource binder developed as part of the School-Community Learning Environment Project
  o Our Words Our Ways
  o Circle of Courage
  o Teaching strategies for FNMI students

4.3.5 Individual Student Supports
- Leadership programs for all students in the school (students all get a chance to be leaders within the school).
- Big Brothers and Sisters run a mentorship program in the school. Students from Mount Royal College are mentors and the program is designed for all students in the school.
- FNMI role models visit school.
- District FNMI liaison staff operate focus groups with FNMI students (problem solving groups).

5. SUMMARY

St. Francis of Assisi School and Le Roi Daniels School, as pilot schools in the *FNMI School-Community Learning Environment Project* participated in an extensive testing program to identify areas of growth and improvement. Project schools administered elder, student, parent, teacher, administrator, and support staff surveys. In addition the Canadian Test of Basic Skills (CTBS), a norm-referenced achievement test was administered to all students. As part of this project the Provincial Achievement Tests (PAT) five year results were reviewed.

The principals of St. Francis of Assisi School in Edmonton and Le Roi Daniels School in Calgary were of great assistance in identifying what they felt were the significant positive practices in their respective schools that had an impact on the success of their FNMI students. Staff from Alberta Education conducted individual principal interviews based on an interview guide (Appendix A) developed specifically for this project. Principals were provided with the interview guide in advance and were encouraged to provide written responses in addition to the interview itself. Interviews were taped to assist with the accuracy of responses. The following practices are applicable to both schools:

FNMI Parent and Community Engagement

In reviewing the individual practices employed by each school to develop positive, supportive relationships with FNMI parents and community, two overarching themes emerged.

1. In both schools, the principal and teachers had primary roles in the development of enhanced relationships with their FNMI parents and community. Although both schools had on-site FNMI liaison workers, the role of relationship building was not left solely to this person; clearly the FNMI Liaison worker's role was to assist the staff in the development of their own relationships with FNMI parents and community. In addition the principal in both schools acted as a leader in the development of this positive, supportive relationship.

2. In both schools FNMI parents and community members were seen to be assets to the school community and their expertise was acknowledged and respected. The creation of a more informal atmosphere was encouraged by both schools and the views of FNMI parents were solicited and considered valuable.

FNMI Cultural & Language Programming

St. Francis of Assisi and Le Roi Daniels schools provided FNMI and non-FNMI students with opportunities to appreciate the richness of FNMI culture. In addition both schools have provided opportunities for students to participate in FNMI cultural programming. Initial reports from St. Francis of Assisi school indicate that the Cree Bilingual Language

Program has resulted in some initial successes in parental/community engagement and student participation. Currently there is no sufficient data to measure the impact of the Cree Bilingual Program on FNMI student achievement.

Teachers, Instruction and Curriculum/Resources

The principals of both schools felt it was important to attract teachers who were committed to improving outcomes for FNMI students, were flexible and demonstrated the ability to develop positive relationships. In addition, both schools were interested in increasing the number of FNMI staff within their school environments.

The principals of the two pilot schools indicated that for their schools to be truly responsive to the needs of their FNMI students it is necessary to go beyond standard procedures to develop relationships, attain cultural knowledge, provide a sense of belonging, encourage literacy, and promote academic success. Three common themes emerge from a review of approaches to instruction at the two pilot schools. Both schools have a focus on literacy, meeting individual needs and assisting their FNMI students with homework. In addition, both schools have approached complex issues and challenges by doing things differently rather than relying on counter-productive solutions.

Le Roi Daniels and St. Francis of Assisi schools have purchased a wide variety of FNMI resources for their libraries and classrooms. These resources are available for use by all students for leisure reading, are incorporated into literacy programs and other curriculum areas. Both schools are supportive of provincial initiatives to infuse FNMI perspectives into curriculum.

Professional Development

Both schools have altered their instructional week to provide one half day per week that is available for professional development. Considerable emphasis has been placed on professional development in the area of FNMI education.

Individual Student Supports

Both schools offered enhanced leadership, mentorship and counseling programs for FNMI students. Programs at Le Roi Daniels were designed for all students where the programs at St. Francis of Assisi were more directed to FNMI students.
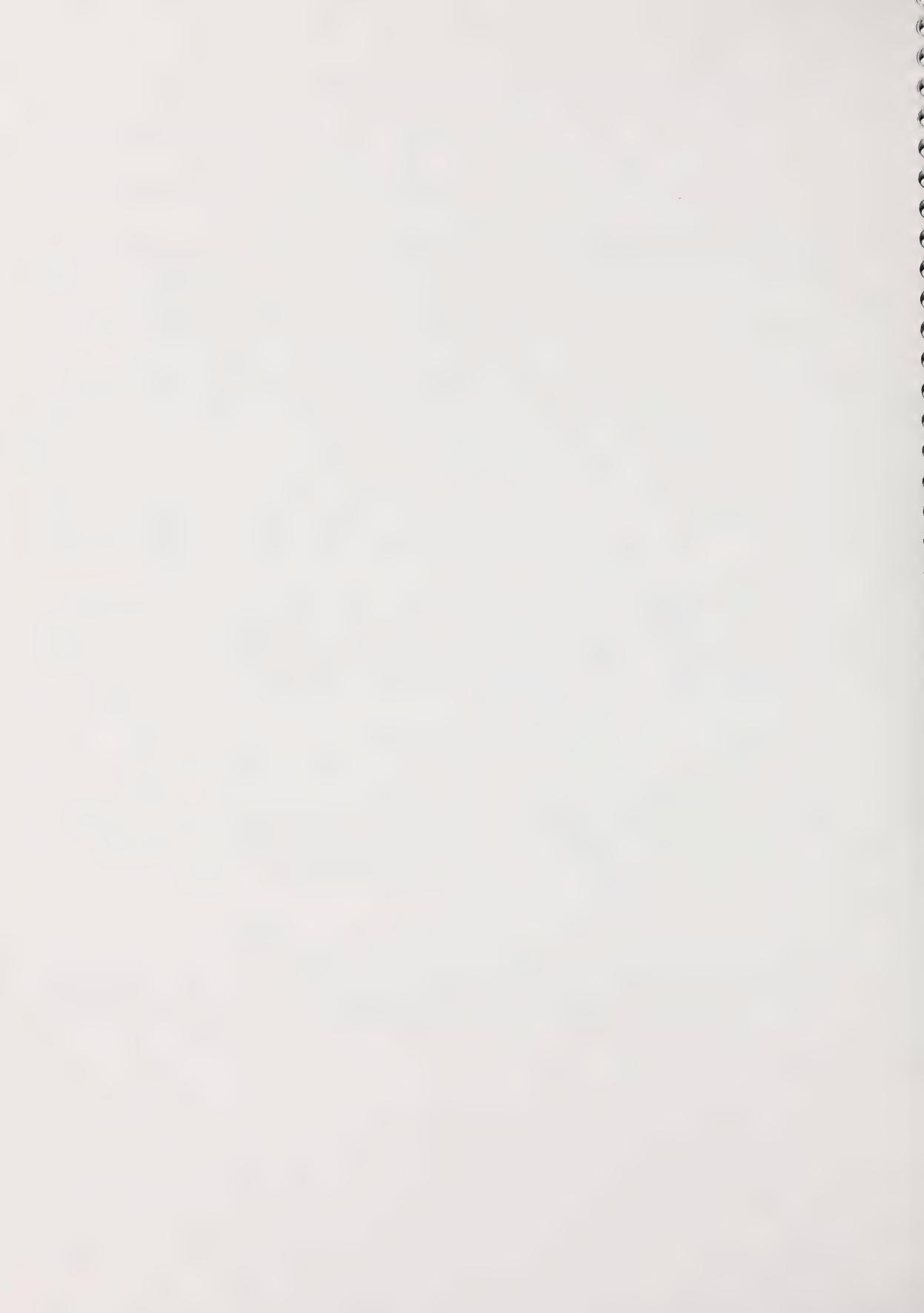
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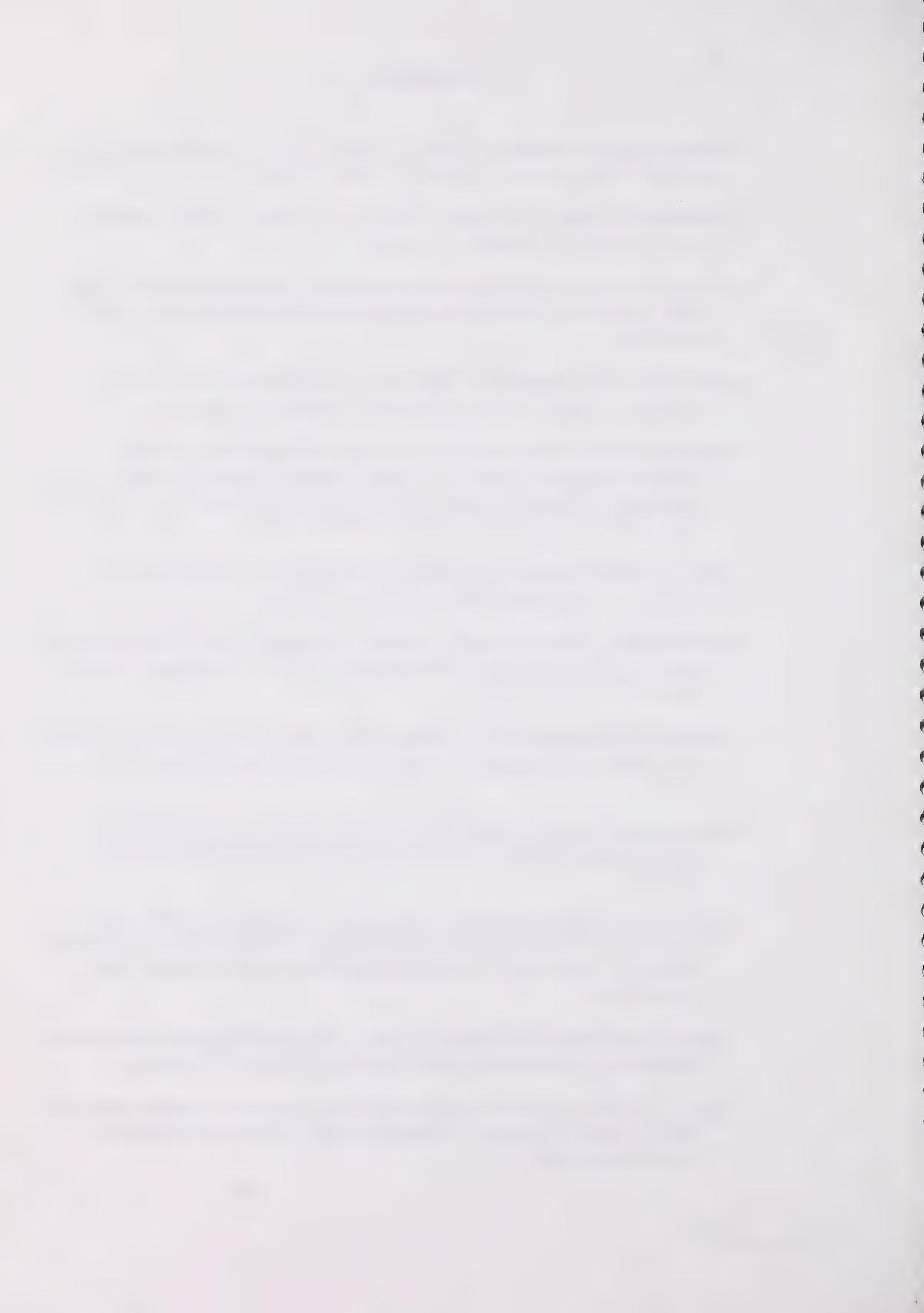
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